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Major Parties in Japanese Election

	Preelection Strength in Lower House	Candidates	Seats Won
Liberal Democratic Party	227	285	223
Social Democratic Party	134	142	70
Japan Renewal Party	36	69	55
Komeito	45	54	51
Japan New Party	0	55	35
Democratic Socialist Party	13	28	15
Japan Communist Party	16	129	15
Harbinger Party	10	15	13

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Special Analysis

JAPAN: **One-Party Rule Ends, Maneuvering Begins**

The Liberal Democratic Party's loss of its majority in yesterday's Diet election ushers in a period of backroom jockeying as politicians seek to form a new government. Trying to build a coalition will preoccupy Japanese leaders for at least several weeks

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The LDP and the conservative breakaway Japan Renewal Party seem to have done well in the election. Although the LDP lost its majority, the 223 seats it won give it the plurality that polls had projected. The JRP exceeded expectations by taking 55 seats. Both parties appear to have benefited from the strength of local support groups as well as voter loyalty to individual politicians.

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At the same time, the Social Democratic Party and the reformist Japan New Party performed poorly. The SDP, Japan's second-largest party, won a record-low 70 seats, and the JNP, which had expected to be the main beneficiary of the public's apparent appetite for change, won only 35. Voters seem to have rejected the SDP's leftist policies as outdated; the organizationally weak JNP appears to have suffered because rainy weather kept voter turnout low—67 percent, down 6 points from the last lower-house election.

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Next Moves

The LDP will have an edge as all parties try to assemble the 256 seats needed for a simple majority. The LDP probably will try to woo independent conservatives as well as such like-minded parties as the JNP and the Harbinger Party, which are expected to merge soon. Some are already pushing themselves as potential coalition partners; the small conservative Democratic Socialist Party has reversed its campaign stance that rejected cooperation. Although JRP leaders are still talking about a broad anti-LDP coalition, they would need to collect virtually every opposition entity except the Communists in order to succeed. Among those they would have to include are the Social Democrats, whose positions have been anathema to the JRP and other opposition parties.

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Prominent LDP leaders are withdrawing their support from Prime Minister Miyazawa in the wake of the election, and he is expected to head a caretaker government until the Diet designates a successor in a

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special session. According to the Constitution, this session must be called by 17 August; [redacted] it will start on 2 August. The LDP's differences with others on the key issue of political reform and its reluctance to share coveted government positions suggest that coalition bargaining could well continue into the special session. (b)(3)

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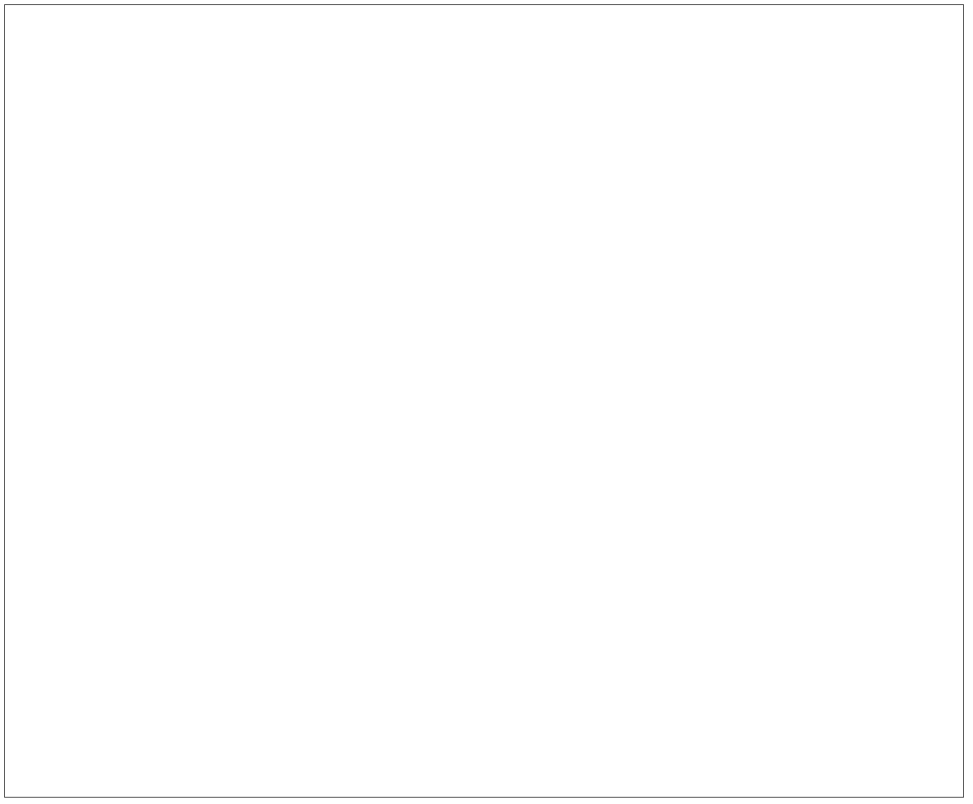

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